UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

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S/1998/1026
3 November 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 3 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BURUNDI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement issued by the Government at the closing of the third session of the peace negotiations in Arusha (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this statement circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gamaliel NDARUZANIYE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement by the Government of the Republic of Burundi at the closing of the third session of the peace negotiations in Arusha

At the closing of the third session of the peace negotiations in Arusha, the Government of the Republic of Burundi issues the following statement:

1. The Government notes with satisfaction that, in terms of the agenda of the session proposed by the facilitator and adopted by the parties to the negotiations, the results have exceeded expectations. Not only did general discussions take place on the second and third agenda items - democracy and good governance, and peace and security, respectively - but also the first three committees were set up and a timetable of work was agreed in preparation for the fourth session of negotiations scheduled for 18 January 1999.

2. The Government welcomes the fact that at this third session, as at the previous two, the discussions took place in a calm and open atmosphere. It believes that this positive outcome is encouraging for the whole peace process both within and outside Burundi.

3. The Government is, however, concerned at the persistence of the violence caused by armed groups, despite their commitment to the suspension of hostilities contained in the declaration of 21 June 1998 by the parties to the peace negotiations. There is a risk that the inability of the negotiators and the Facilitator to prevent such violence will result in the Burundian people's no longer considering the Arusha negotiations to be a path to peace but, on the contrary, a source of danger, given that the sessions in Arusha have been preceded and followed by massacres perpetrated by armed groups in a bid to win a place at the Arusha negotiations.

4. The Government is also concerned at the fact that the economic sanctions unjustly imposed on the Burundian people are being maintained despite the numerous promises made by the regional leaders and by the Facilitator of the Arusha negotiations. The process whereby new conditions for the lifting of sanctions are systematically imposed once the previous conditions have been met and whereby deadlines are constantly postponed has ended by discrediting the sponsors of the sanctions in the eyes of the Burundian people, who are anxious to know what their true objectives are.

5. The Government calls on the international community, which has witnessed the unfailing goodwill displayed by the Barundi and has observed the results already attained, to become more closely involved and take action to save the peace process in Burundi by advocating the lifting of the embargo and the suspension of hostilities. The ongoing violence, economic sanctions and destitution, and the tragic humanitarian situations to which they give rise, mean that further progress in the peace process may be irretrievably compromised, despite its promising start.

6. Peace, security, social order and stability are incompatible with extreme poverty. In order to give every opportunity to the national reconciliation which the Barundi actively seek, the Government appeals to the international community to resume economic cooperation without delay. Such support would undoubtedly contribute to the success of the peace process by improving the people's living conditions.

7. The Government of the Republic of Burundi reaffirms its irrevocable commitment to pursuing its efforts to reconcile the Barundi through dialogue and negotiations both within and outside the country. That is its principal responsibility and mission, which is dictated by the highest interests of the Burundian nation. This constitutes a motivation stronger than any other form of pressure.

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3 November 1998

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 62
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 2 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to my letter dated 28 October 1998, I have the honour to draw your attention to new violations of the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus and of the flight information region of Nicosia by military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force, recorded on 29 and 30 October 1998.

On 29 October, 31 military aircraft (28 F-16s, 1 CN-235 and 2 KC-135s), as well as 1 military helicopter of the Turkish Air Force, entered the Nicosia flight information region, violating international air traffic regulations. Sixteen F-16s violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying over the area of Karpasia before exiting towards a south-easterly direction. The CN-235, as well as the military helicopter, violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying over the area of the Cape of Apostle Andreas. The 2 KC-135s, as well as 12 of the F-16s, exited the Nicosia flight information region towards a south-easterly direction.

On 30 October, five military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force (two F-4s, two RF-4s and one CN-235) entered the northern Nicosia flight information region, violating international air traffic regulations. The two F-4s and two RF-4s exited the Nicosia flight information region flying towards the Ankara flight information region. The CN-235 violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying east of the area of the Cape of Apostle Andreas before exiting the Nicosia flight information region.

As stated in my previous letters, such unauthorized intrusions into the Nicosia flight information region and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus are in violation of international air traffic rules and, at the same time, they are in contravention of the provisions of the Security Council

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resolutions on Cyprus, which state that such overflights increase tension on the island and undermine efforts towards achieving a final settlement.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, I wish to strongly protest these new provocative acts by Turkey against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. The frequency, intensity and large number of aircraft involved in the above violations are a further reminder of Turkey's offensive disregard of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and all the relevant decisions of the Organization on the question of Cyprus.

Furthermore, these continuing overflights by the Turkish Air Force, as well as the presence of the Turkish military occupation forces on the island, constitute the underlying causes of tension in Cyprus.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 62, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sotos ZACKHEOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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S/1998/1028
3 November 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 3 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward to you, on behalf of the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States and the Head of State of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Abdulsalami Alhaji Abubakar, the text of the peace agreement signed at the end of the Twenty-first Summit of the Authority of the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States by President João Bernardo Vieira of Guinea-Bissau and General Ansumane Mane, head of the self-proclaimed military junta, held at Abuja on 31 October and 1 November 1998.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ibrahim A. GAMBARI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Agreement between the Government of Guinea-Bissau and the self-proclaimed military junta

The parties to the conflict in the Guinea-Bissau, meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, on 31 October and 1 November 1998 in the context of the efforts of the Twenty-first Summit of the Authority of the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS),

HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. To reaffirm the ceasefire agreement signed in Praia on 26 August 1998;

2. To the total withdrawal from Guinea-Bissau of all foreign troops. This withdrawal shall be done simultaneously with the deployment of an ECOWAS Military Observer Group interposition force, which will take over from the withdrawn forces;

3. That the interposition force will guarantee security along the Guinea-Bissau/Senegal border, keep the warring parties apart and guarantee free access to humanitarian organizations and agencies to reach the affected civilian population. In this regard, the Oswaldo Vieira international airport and the seaport shall be opened immediately;

4. To immediately put in place a government of national unity, which will include, among other things, representatives of the self-proclaimed junta, in line with the agreement already reached by the parties;

5. That general and presidential elections shall be held not later than the end of March 1999. These elections will be observed by ECOWAS, the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries and the international community.

DONE AT ABUJA, THIS 1ST DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1998.

(Signed) President, João Bernardo VIEIRA
for the Government of the Republic of
Guinea-Bissau

(Signed) General Ansumane MANE
for the self-proclaimed
military junta

WITNESSED BY:

(Signed) His Excellency, General Abdulsalami ABUBAKAR
Head of State, Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
for and on behalf of the Authority of Heads of State
and Government of ECOWAS

(Signed) His Excellency, Yahya A. J. J. JAMMEH
President of the Republic of the Gambia

(Signed) Honourable Koffi PANOU
Minister of Communications of the Togolese Republic
for and on behalf of the President of the Togolese Republic
and the Chairman of ECOWAS

(Signed) H.E. Lansana KOUYATE
ECOWAS Executive Secretary

(Signed) Professor Ibrahima FALL
Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs
for and on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

(Signed) Ms. Adwoa COLEMAN
Organization of African Unity Representative
for and on behalf of the Secretary-General of the
Organization of African Unity (OAU)

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S/1998/1029
3 November 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION IN TAJIKISTAN

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1167 (1998) of 14 May 1998 by which the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) was extended to 15 November 1998. It brings up to date the record of developments in Tajikistan and the activities of UNMOT since my interim report of 13 August 1998 (S/1998/754 and Add.1).

II. MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

2. After several weeks of relative stagnation in the peace process, another crisis erupted when, on 22 September, Otakhon Latifi, a prominent member of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) and the senior member of the Commission on National Reconciliation (CNR), was shot dead outside his Dushanbe apartment by an unknown gunman. The same day, I issued a statement condemning the murder of Mr. Latifi, who was an active supporter of the peace process. The following day, the Government of Tajikistan issued a statement accusing UTO of violating the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan and accusing its members of being involved in criminal activities. The UTO leadership firmly refuted those allegations and, on 25 September, suspended activities in both CNR and the Government, conditioning their return on the arrest of Mr. Latifi's assassin and concrete measures by the Government to improve the security of its members.

3. President Emomali Rakhmonov and CNR Chairman Abdullo Nuri met on 26 and 28 September, the second time with other members of the UTO leadership present. Following the second meeting, the two leaders issued a 10-point statement outlining the measures both parties had agreed to take to resolve the crisis and expedite the implementation of the General Agreement. The statement indicated, in particular, that the parties intended to improve the security of UTO representatives in CNR and the Government; to establish a joint government/UTO commission to monitor the investigation of Mr. Latifi's murder; to speed up government reform through the incorporation of UTO representatives; to establish a joint mobile task force to combat crime and ensure discipline in military units; to accelerate the implementation of the first two stages of the military

protocol; to implement the provisions of the amnesty law; to promote peace and reconciliation through the mass media; to hold regular meetings of the President and CNR; to improve logistic support for CNR; and to organize seminars and meetings with the participation of the public and political personalities on the implementation of the General Agreement. On 29 September, UTO resumed its functions in CNR and in the Government.

4. Throughout this crisis, Mr. Ján Kubiš, my Special Representative, and the members of the Contact Group used their best efforts to contain the situation.

5. The Government and UTO have since begun to take the steps mentioned in the joint statement. President Rakhmonov and Mr. Nuri have met regularly. President Rakhmonov has ordered a reverification of the status of implementation of the military protocol. A joint commission has been set up to monitor the Government's investigation into the killing of Mr. Latifi. Security measures for UTO representatives have been bolstered through the assignment of personal security guards and the allocation of additional funds for this purpose. On 1 October, the Government and UTO issued a joint appeal to unaffiliated groups to surrender their weapons and return to civilian life by 7 October. On 11 October, the Government, with the endorsement of UTO, initiated military action against two armed groups in the area east of Dushanbe. A number of fighters belonging to those groups have reportedly been killed; however, the leaders are still at large. This action is ongoing.

6. The repatriation of the last 157 UTO fighters remaining in Afghanistan took place from 23 to 26 September. The convoy was escorted by the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), in accordance with the military protocol. UNMOT monitored the movement of the convoy from Nizhniy Panj to Dushanbe, but for security reasons did not accompany it to its destination in Tajikabad. UNMOT provided bedding for the fighters as well as a 30-day supply of food.

7. It will be recalled that only limited funds were provided to support the assembly areas for no more than two months, until voluntary contributions became available. UNMOT has now ended its support for the assembly areas, having delivered a total of 355 tons of food and 5,916 bedding items, including mattresses, blankets, pillows and toiletries.

8. The Contact Group of guarantor States and international organizations (Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Organization of the Islamic Conference) continued to provide valuable support to the process. For the time being, the proposed foreign ministers' meeting of the Contact Group has been put on hold.

III. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL AGREEMENT

9. The new deadlines adopted by CNR on 30 July (see S/1998/754, para. 15) have lapsed. At the time of reporting, the state of implementation of the substantive provisions of the peace agreement was as described below.

Military issues

10. Stages I and II of the military protocol (registration, collection of weapons and oath-taking) are nearing completion. A reverification of the process is under way. Meanwhile, the Joint Central Review Commission, set up to evaluate the fitness of UTO personnel for continued military service (stage III of the protocol), has commenced its work.

11. On 7 October, the Government and UTO began joint action against unaffiliated armed groups, as foreseen under the military protocol.

12. There has been no movement on the reform of the power structures.

Political issues

13. No progress was made in the implementation of the amnesty law.

14. UTO has submitted its candidates for the Central Electoral Commission. No action has been taken on the revision of the electoral law.

15. On 8 October the Government announced the appointment of Zokir Vazirov to the post of Deputy Prime Minister. With this, the appointment of UTO members to cabinet-level posts in accordance with the 30 per cent quota is all but complete, except for the defence portfolio. On 26 October, President Rakhmonov, in a letter to Mr. Nuri, confirmed the allocation of 19 senior government posts to UTO. There has been no movement on the allocation of posts at the regional level.

16. The ban on political parties that belong to UTO has not yet been lifted, pending the announcement by UTO of the disbandment of its armed forces as foreseen in the military protocol.

Legal issues

17. There has been extensive debate on a range of issues relating to constitutional development and reform, but no clear proposals have so far emerged. The revised law on political parties is to be considered by the Parliament at its next session, scheduled for mid-November.

Return of refugees

18. The return of refugees from Afghanistan was completed. Repatriation from CIS countries has continued with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

IV. HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES

19. The security situation in parts of the country continued to have a negative impact on humanitarian and other assistance, particularly in the Karategin valley, where United Nations activities have remained suspended. The 1998 consolidated appeal for Tajikistan has generated only some 30 per cent of the

total funds requested. My report to the General Assembly on emergency assistance for peace, normalcy and rehabilitation in Tajikistan (A/53/316) highlights the overall situation in the country.

20. On 17 and 18 October, the United Nations Office for Project Services, together with the other United Nations agencies involved in this sector, carried out an assessment of the humanitarian needs in the Karategin valley. There has been some deterioration compared to last year, although it has not been drastic.

21. The rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programme, financed by the United Nations Development Programme and executed by the Office for Project Services, is implementing new subprojects through co-financing arrangements with the United States Agency for International Development, the European Community Humanitarian Office and UNHCR.

22. During visits by high-level delegations of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the Tajik Government and UTO reiterated their commitment to economic reform programmes in the country. The Aga Khan paid an official visit to Tajikistan from 21 to 29 September. The Aga Khan Foundation provides extensive humanitarian assistance to the Tajik population, particularly in the Gorniy-Badakshan region.

V. SECURITY

23. Security in the country continued to be precarious. Crime was prevalent and there were frequent violent incidents. The most serious incident for UNMOT occurred on 17 August, when one of its security officers was found shot dead in his apartment in Dushanbe. The Government has carried out an investigation, and the United Nations has further investigated certain aspects of the case. A United Nations team visited Dushanbe at the end of October to consult with the government investigators.

24. On 18 August, my Special Representative received from the Tajik authorities a warning about the activities of a renegade group operating in Dushanbe with the aim of destabilizing the situation in the country, possibly including hostage-taking. In response to this warning I authorized, as a precautionary measure, the temporary relocation to Tashkent of non-essential internationally recruited staff members of the United Nations system, many of whom were military observers who have since been repatriated to their home countries. The few who remained in Tashkent were recently brought back to Dushanbe.

25. In addition to the murder of Mr. Latifi, there was an increase in the number of politically motivated crimes. On 27 August, the Mayor of Tursunzade was shot and killed along with four others. The Government attributed the killing to forces that wished to destabilize the political and social situation and to disrupt the peace process in the country. Only two weeks earlier, the Chairman of the district of Shakhrinau, located between Tursunzade and Dushanbe, had also been shot and killed.

26. On 12 October, authorities in Khujand detained 38 persons, among them 15 government servicemen, for the abduction of the Deputy Mayor of Khujand and

several others. Among those detained was the Deputy Commander of a unit belonging to the Ministry of Interior.

27. In the evening of 15 October, three explosions took place in Dushanbe, the first one in the courtyard of the CNR building and the following two in residential areas of the city. On 29 October, an explosive device went off in Dushanbe outside the residence of the Chairman of the CNR Military Subcommission. There were no casualties, and no one has claimed responsibility for the acts.

28. Some progress was made in the investigation of the killing of four UNMOT personnel in July. On 1 September, three suspects were handed over by UTO and brought to Dushanbe for further investigation. In the course of the investigation, a UTO field commander in the Komsomolabad area was alleged to have instigated the killing. The Government and UTO are discussing how and where he should be questioned. My Special Representative has emphasized to both Tajik parties the need to complete the investigation expeditiously and to bring to justice those found to be responsible for the crime.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

29. For reasons of security and pending the completion of the investigation into the murder of UNMOT personnel, the Mission's field activities remained suspended. When it became apparent that this state of affairs might continue for some time, it was decided to temporarily reduce the UNMOT military component by 36 military observers. This was effected in the second half of September.

30. As at October 1998, UNMOT comprised 170 civilian staff, of whom 54 were internationally recruited, and 33 military observers, from Austria (3), Bangladesh (3), Bulgaria (3), Denmark (2), Ghana (2), Indonesia (2), Jordan (3), Nepal (2), Nigeria (2), Poland (3), the Czech Republic (2), Ukraine (3), Switzerland (1) and Uruguay (2). Two civilian police officers from Austria and Poland respectively are included in the total. The Government of Switzerland has decided to withdraw from UNMOT because of security concerns. Its three-member medical team will be replaced by personnel from Bangladesh. Brigadier General Tengku Ariffin bin Mohammed continued as Chief Military Observer.

31. The overall number of military observers was based on the peak requirement during the first two stages of the military protocol. This part of the process is nearing completion. Bearing in mind also the constraints imposed by the security situation, the strength of the military component will be maintained at 30. This matter will be kept under review in order to make further adjustments, depending on developments.

32. UNMOT continued to cooperate closely with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on matters of constitutional reform and democratization. It maintained close contact with the CIS Collective Peacekeeping Forces regarding the maintenance of the ceasefire and security, and remained in touch with the Russian border forces on matters of mutual concern.

VII. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

33. The General Assembly, in its resolution 52/229 B of 26 June 1998, appropriated the initial amount of $8,015,120 gross for the maintenance of UNMOT for the period from 1 July to 31 October 1998. Additional appropriation for the maintenance of UNMOT beyond 31 October 1998, based on the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 (A/52/772/Add.2), is currently under consideration by the Assembly. Based on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee, the cost of maintaining UNMOT for the 12-month period from 1 July 1998 is estimated at $20 million gross. Therefore, should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate beyond 15 November 1998, the cost of maintaining the Mission would be limited to the amounts indicated above.

34. As at 15 October, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNMOT from the inception of the Mission to 31 October 1998 amounted to $9.2 million, which represents some 22 per cent of the total assessed contributions. The unpaid assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $1.8 billion.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS

35. After a period of relative stagnation, the crisis at the end of September led to renewed movement in the political process. The parties are gradually working their way towards declaring the completion of stages I and II outlined in the protocol on military issues, notwithstanding certain shortcomings, for example those with respect to control over the arms of the UTO fighters. It should be noted that UTO is to announce during stage II the disbandment of its armed units, which would open the door to lifting the ban on the activities of the political parties that make up UTO. There has been some further movement on the appointment of UTO personalities to government positions.

36. In May, the Parliament's decision to amend the bill on political parties so as to exclude the Islamic Revival Party, the largest component of UTO, caused a serious crisis that threatened to undermine the basis of the peace agreement. The crisis was eventually overcome, and it is hoped that the Parliament will consider constructively the revised bill on political parties at its forthcoming session, which is to begin in mid-November, taking into account the formula agreed upon by the Conciliation Commission. The Parliament had based its decision in May on a provision of the Constitution that stipulates that Tajikistan is a secular State. The debate over this provision and its meaning has continued, but there have been indications recently that both sides may be prepared to seek a solution to this issue in a spirit of compromise. This can only be encouraged.

37. That is not to say that there are not formidable difficulties to be resolved on almost all the issues regulated in the peace agreement. Much remains to be done before the holding of elections and the installation of a new national Government, which is to mark the end of the transition period. I am convinced that this process, in order to have its desired outcome, will continue to require active international support, through UNMOT and the Contact Group in

particular. I therefore recommend that the Mission's mandate be extended for another six months, until 15 May 1999.

38. The precarious security situation in Tajikistan has remained a very significant hindrance to the functioning of UNMOT and other United Nations agencies and programmes. While acknowledging the efforts of the authorities to enhance the protection of international personnel, I am deeply concerned that there has not been more progress in establishing all relevant facts concerning the killing of the four members of UNMOT in July. I have asked my Special Representative to continue to urge the authorities and UTO to cooperate effectively in solving the case. So long as the circumstances surrounding this crime, particularly the motive, are not known and until appropriate action is taken, United Nations personnel will need to operate with utmost caution, even if this represents a hindrance in the performance of their duties.

39. In conclusion, I wish to pay tribute to Mr. Kubiš, my Special Representative, and to the men and women serving with UNMOT for the manner in which they have performed their difficult duties and stood up to the dangers they continue to face. I also wish to express my appreciation to the countries contributing personnel to the Mission for their understanding and their support for this difficult assignment.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 40
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter from Fares Bouez, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lebanon, on the subject of the transportation of soil, by Israel, in the occupied territories in South Lebanon.

I have the honour to request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 40, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Samir MOUBARAK
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

[Original: Arabic]

Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lebanon addressed to the Secretary-General

Israeli forces in southern Lebanon have recently excavated hundreds of tons of soil in the occupied areas of Hasbayya and Urqub, using dozens of trucks and earth movers to transport it into Israeli territory for the purposes of reclaiming Israeli agricultural land, and thereby depriving Lebanese farmers of the soil from their lands. Prior to this, in the last few weeks, Israeli trucks have transported soil from the south of Mahel al-Dardarah and Marj al-Khayyam in the occupied area of Marj Uyun to an area on the Israeli side of the border.

This most recent act of aggression by Israel signals a new departure in Israel's practice of blatantly disregarding the rights of citizens and States. There can be no question that this is a shameless act of organized theft of the resources of an occupied area. It creates new circumstances on the ground by transforming agricultural areas into arid land. It inflicts environmental damage on the surrounding area and causes serious harm to the owners, whose land has been so transformed that they are no longer able to cultivate it and are forced to abandon it.

Lebanon requests that you intervene expeditiously with the Israeli authorities in order to put a stop to a deplorable practice which is becoming more frequent and persistent, and to ensure that Israel desists from its determined efforts to inflict harm on Lebanon and the Lebanese people.

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LETTER DATED 3 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the moment when the Security Council has just adopted an important resolution concerning Western Sahara which lends timely, renewed impetus to the process of implementing the Settlement Plan for Western Sahara and the Houston agreements between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, I have the honour to inform you that I today signed the Status-of-Forces Agreement with the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Bernard Miyet, at United Nations Headquarters.

Algeria's signing of this important agreement confirms the determined support which Algeria has provided constantly to the Secretary-General and the Security Council in their efforts, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, to hold, at the earliest possible date, a free, fair and impartial referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara that will enable the Saharan people to decide their own future.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter to be brought to the attention of the other members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdallah BAALI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

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S/1998/1032
4 November 1998

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LETTER DATED 2 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 9 (b) (i) OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 687 (1991) ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I was informed that during the informal consultations of the Security Council on 31 October 1998, the Council requested the Special Commission to present a technical report to the Council on the consequences of Iraq's decision of 31 October.

As reflected in the letter submitted to the Council on 31 October (S/1998/1023) by the Deputy Executive Chairman, Mr. Charles Duelfer, Iraq's decision to put a stop to all inspection activities by the Commission.

Iraq's decision, when combined with the decision it took on 5 August (see S/1998/718), brings to a complete halt all inspection activities of the Commission, either for disarmament or monitoring purposes. Several visiting inspection teams scheduled for the coming weeks in support of monitoring activities have been cancelled.

Routine logistic and maintenance work has not been prohibited by Iraq. Thus, such activities as the L-100 transport flights and maintenance of the camera systems - activities relevant to both the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) - continue.

The Commission understands that IAEA is continuing its monitoring operations within the limitations imposed by Iraq's decisions of 5 August and 31 October 1998. The Commission will continue to provide the nuclear monitoring teams with logistical support when so requested by IAEA. The Commission wishes to draw the Council's attention to the fact that a clear distinction between IAEA and the Commission's monitoring activities, which Iraq has sought to draw, will be difficult to establish, considering the inherent links between the mandates of IAEA and the Commission.

For the moment, I have decided to maintain the full scope of the Commission's personnel and capabilities in Iraq so that they can resume full activities without delay should the situation change in the next days. This

decision may need to be reassessed in case Iraq does not rescind its decisions in the near future.

In conclusion, Iraq's decisions of 5 August and 31 October make it impossible for the Commission to implement its disarmament and monitoring rights and responsibilities. The Commission is not in a position to provide the Council with any level of assurance regarding Iraq's compliance with its obligations not to retain and not to re-establish proscribed activities. Although the Commission's monitoring cameras are permitted by Iraq to work, they are, by themselves, minor in terms of providing credible monitoring. This can be accomplished only with full, immediate access and the exercise of the full scope of the Commission's monitoring resources, in particular no-notice, on-the-spot inspections.

I will keep the Security Council informed of any further significant developments that may occur.

(Signed) Richard BUTLER

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4 November 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 3 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 3 November 1998, which I have received from the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

98-33660 (E) 041198

Annex

Letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the Security Council request for the International Atomic Energy Agency to provide a briefing on the implications of Iraq's decision of 31 October 1998 to stop all forms of interaction with the United Nations Special Commission, I would be grateful if you could arrange to transmit the attached letter to the President of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohamed ELBARADEI

Appendix

Letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency addressed to the President of the Security Council

At the emergency session of the Security Council held on 31 October 1998, the Council indicated its intention to ask the Secretary-General, inter alia, to arrange for briefings by the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the implications of Iraq's 31 October decision to stop all forms of interaction with UNSCOM and to halt all its activities inside Iraq, including monitoring activities.

In that context, I can report that so far IAEA has been able to continue its schedule of monitoring inspections. The IAEA Nuclear Monitoring Group in Iraq currently totals nine persons, comprising six nationalities. The basic routine activities of the Group involve carrying out up to two monitoring inspections per day as well as up to two land-based radiation surveys. In addition, it is planned that the Group will carry out a campaign of wide-area environmental sample collection.

IAEA is able to carry out the technical aspects of its monitoring inspections independently but, in the context of the assistance and cooperation called for in paragraph 13 of resolution 687 (1991), IAEA relies upon UNSCOM for logistical services and facilities in Iraq, which continue to be provided in such areas as:

- Air transport between Bahrain and Baghdad;
- Air transport within Iraq (helicopter);
- Office and laboratory accommodation, including secure areas;
- Communications, including audio/video network;
- Road vehicles and maintenance services;
- Maintenance of joint-use video surveillance systems;
- Installation of in-field environmental monitoring equipment;
- Miscellaneous domestic services.

The efficiency and effectiveness of the ongoing monitoring and verification activities of IAEA are dependent upon the continuing availability of such assistance and cooperation.

It will be recalled that, as recorded in my October progress report to the Council (S/1998/927), the IAEA activities in Iraq continue to be limited by Iraq's decision on 5 August 1998 to restrict its cooperation with IAEA. Again, as recorded in that report, the inability of IAEA to exercise its right to full

and free access under its ongoing monitoring and verification plan has resulted in a significant reduction in the level of assurance that can be provided by that plan.

Subject to further guidance by the Security Council, IAEA is continuing with the limited implementation of its ongoing monitoring and verification plan and remains ready to provide such additional information or clarification as may be requested by the Council.

(Signed) Mohamed ELBARADEI

UNITED
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Security Council

Distr.
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S/1998/1034
4 November 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 4 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TAJIKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan of 4 November 1998 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Rashid ALIMOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

98-33712 (E) 041198

/...

Annex

Statement by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan

On 4 November 1998, at about 4 a.m., an armed group of Mahmud Khudoiberdiev's men carried out an attack on a number of important targets in the town of Khujand. In the course of the attack they attempted to gain control over several administrative buildings. As a result of the armed encounter, casualties and enormous material losses were sustained.

This barbaric attack was preceded by the action carried out on 3 November 1998 by a terrorist group from the same movement in the town of Kurgan-Tube in Khatlon province, where several explosions occurred, leaving behind a number of human casualties. A search operation undertaken by the forces of law and order led within a very short time to the identification and arrest of this terrorist group, members of which testified that Mahmud Khudoiberdiev's forces were preparing a large-scale military operation in the territory of the Leninabad province in the next few days.

It is well known that these anti-government forces in Tajikistan are pursuing the aim of altering the country's course towards national reconciliation and overthrowing by violent means the constitutional power in order to satisfy their own narrow, mercenary ambitions. To achieve them they are prepared to engage both in terror and, effectively, in a declaration of war against their own people.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan invites all those participating in the anti-government movement to lay down their arms and surrender to the country's forces of law and order. Otherwise the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan reserves the right to use against them all the means at its disposal, including if necessary their complete elimination.

The Tajikistan authorities hereby declare, with the utmost resolution, that attempts to alter forcibly the path chosen by the people of Tajikistan towards a lasting peace and national harmony are doomed to total failure. The course we have set is immutable and irreversible.

UNITED
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General Assembly
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4 November 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 72 (d)
REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT OF THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: REGIONAL CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES: ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SECURITY QUESTIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report and Yaoundé Declaration on Peace, Security and Development adopted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the member countries of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa at the conclusion of their tenth meeting, held at Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 26 to 30 October 1998.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Martin BELINGA EBOUTOU
Minister Plenipotentiary

ANNEX I

Report of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa on its Tenth Ministerial Meeting held at Yaoundé from 26 to 30 October 1998

INTRODUCTION

1. The tenth meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa was held at Yaoundé from 26 to 30 October 1998.

2. The following States members took part in the meeting: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe. Angola and Rwanda were unable to attend.

3. The following also participated in the work of the meeting: the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations; the representative of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU); and the Secretary-General of the Central African Customs and Economic Union (CACEU)/CEMAC.

4. The host country for the ministerial meeting invited the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the following countries as observers: Belgium, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands and the Republic of Korea.

5. At the opening ceremony of the ministerial meeting, statements were made by: the current Chairman of the Committee, His Excellency Mr. Casimir Oyemba, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Gabonese Republic; the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Cheikh-Tidiane Gaye, Director of the United Nations Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, who read out a message from the Secretary-General; the representative of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, His Excellency Mr. Pascal Gayama, Assistant Secretary-General of OAU, who read out a message from the Secretary-General of OAU; and His Excellency Mr. Peter Mafany Musonge, Prime Minister, Head of Government of the Republic of Cameroon, who formally opened the meeting.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

(i) Election of the Committee Bureau.

(ii) Report of the outgoing Bureau, by the Chairman.

(iii) Consideration of the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

(iv) Review of the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa.

(v) Inter-State cooperation in security matters among the countries of Central Africa.

(vi) Evaluation of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Standing Advisory Committee contained in the report of the Meeting of Ministers of Defence and of the Interior held at Libreville, Gabon, from 28 to 30 April 1998, and in the Bata Declaration, adopted at the ministerial meeting held at Bata, Equatorial Guinea, from 18 to 21 May 1998, on democratic institutions and peace in Central Africa, including:

Establishment of an early warning mechanism;

Organization of military exercises in connection with peacekeeping operations between the armed forces of the countries of Central Africa;

Establishment of a Supreme Council for the promotion of peace and the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Political Crises and Armed Conflict in Central Africa;

Establishment of a subregional parliament in Central Africa.

(vii) Consideration of the proposed establishment of a subregional centre for human rights and democracy.

(viii) Consideration and adoption of the report of the ministerial meeting.

(ix) Consideration and adoption of the final declaration.

CONDUCT OF WORK

I. ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE BUREAU

7. The Committee elected a new Bureau, as follows:

Chairman: Cameroon

First Vice-Chairman: Chad

Second Vice-Chairman: Burundi

Rapporteur: Democratic Republic of the Congo.

II. REPORT OF THE OUTGOING BUREAU

8. The Committee took note of the report by His Excellency Mr. Casimir Oyemba, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Gabonese Republic, as outgoing Chairman. The Committee expressed its gratification at the dynamism and efficiency with which the outgoing Bureau had discharged its mandate.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT AND THE PROMOTION OF DURABLE PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

9. The Committee reaffirmed the importance and relevance of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It decided to make the report a working document.

10. The Committee welcomed the fact that the Security Council and General Assembly of the United Nations and international financial institutions had undertaken to help Africa to implement the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report. In that connection it welcomed with satisfaction the adoption of Security Council resolution 1197 (1998), which requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to assist OAU and subregional organizations in conflict prevention and peacekeeping and peace-building in Africa.

11. The Committee noted that several recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report had already been implemented in the subregion and that they mirrored, for the most part, the measures which it had previously adopted.

12. The Committee invited the United Nations and the international community to support the projects formulated by it to implement the recommendations contained in the report.

13. In view of the importance of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the Committee mandated its Bureau to take appropriate steps to organize a high-level seminar aimed at facilitating implementation of the recommendations of relevance to Central Africa.

IV. REVIEW OF THE GEOPOLITICAL AND SECURITY SITUATIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Burundi

14. The Committee welcomed the positive developments in Burundi and in particular the conclusion of the agreement on the political platform between the Government and the National Assembly with a view to establishing transition institutions.

15. It encouraged the Government to maintain the dialogue begun with all the parties to the conflict, including the armed bands.

16. The Committee mandated the Chairman of the Bureau to take appropriate steps with a view to the immediate lifting of the embargo, which had had disastrous consequences for the population of Burundi and in particular the most vulnerable segments of Burundian society.

Cameroon

17. The Committee welcomed the climate of peace and stability prevailing after the various electoral exercises held in Cameroon. In that regard it welcomed the policy of openness, reconciliation and participation followed by the President of the Republic of Cameroon, His Excellency Mr. Paul Biya. That policy would assist in the promotion and consolidation of "quiet democracy", a factor for social peace.

18. In view of the importance for peace and security in the Gulf of Guinea of the border dispute between Cameroon and Nigeria, the Committee supported the efforts of the Cameroonian Government in the quest for a peaceful settlement through legal means of the dispute. In that connection it called on all States parties to the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War to ensure its full implementation. The Committee noted with satisfaction the attitude of Cameroon in that regard.

19. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the International Court of Justice had declared itself competent to hear the dispute. It appealed to friendly countries and to the international community for assistance in maintaining peace between the two countries before, during and after the Court's verdict.

20. In that regard the Committee urged the two parties to comply fully with the interim measures of protection handed down by the Court in its order of 15 March 1996.

Congo

21. The Committee welcomed the restoration of peace in the Congo and took note with satisfaction of the measures taken by the Congolese authorities to promote national reconciliation, the reconstruction of the country, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms and the relaunching of the democratic process.

22. It appealed to the international community to support the efforts of the Congo, which fell fully within the context of the consolidation of peace.

Gabon

23. The Committee welcomed continuance of the democratic process in Gabon, in particular the establishment of institutions for the regulation of democracy, such as the National Council on Communication (CNC) and the National Council on Democracy.

24. The Committee took note of the imminent holding in Gabon for the second consecutive time since the advent of a multi-party system of free and transparent presidential elections.

25. The Committee also commended the constant efforts of the President of the Gabonese Republic, His Excellency Mr. El Hadj Omar Bongo, to promote peace and security in the Central African subregion.

Equatorial Guinea

26. The Committee took note of the information provided by the delegation of Equatorial Guinea on the events which had taken place in that country on 17 May 1997 and 21 January 1998.

27. The Committee commended the Government of Equatorial Guinea on its efforts to restore peace and national harmony.

28. It recommended closer cooperation among the countries of Central Africa to avoid destabilization of the subregion.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

29. The Committee, deeply concerned by the situation obtaining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, welcomed the varied initiatives taken to reach a settlement of the crisis in that country, in particular that of 24 September 1998 by the President, His Excellency El Hadj Omar Bongo.

30. The Committee made an urgent appeal for the conclusion of a ceasefire and for the respect for the principles of the inviolability of inherited colonial borders, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention, set forth in the Charters of the Organization of African Unity and of the United Nations.

31. The Committee mandated the Chairman of the Bureau to take all initiatives that might contribute to a final settlement of the crisis and to the immediate and unconditional withdrawal from the Democratic Republic of the Congo of foreign forces of aggression.

Central African Republic

32. The Committee welcomed the positive developments in the Central African Republic owing, inter alia, to the presence of the United Nations Mission (MINURCA). Nevertheless, it noted that:

Restructuring of the Central African armed forces was still under way;

Forty-five per cent of the light weapons had yet to be collected;

The situation remained precarious.

33. The Committee strongly recommended the maintenance of MINURCA beyond the holding of legislative and presidential elections. It mandated the Chairman of

the Bureau to undertake initiatives in that regard vis-à-vis the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Sao Tome and Principe

34. The Committee again noted with satisfaction the efforts of the Government of Sao Tome and Principe to consolidate the democratic process which was assisting in the strengthening of peace in the subregion.

35. In that regard, the Committee took note with satisfaction of the positive status of preparations for the holding, in early November, of the third pluralist legislative election.

Chad

36. The Committee welcomed the outstretched-hand policy of President Idriss Deby.

37. It welcomed the measures taken to restrict the circulation of small-calibre weapons and the decisive manner in which disarmament operations had been carried out.

38. It also welcomed the commencement of demining operations through the support of friendly countries, and encouraged the international community and non-governmental organizations to make contributions with a view to concluding those operations.

39. The Committee encouraged Chad to consolidate peace by maintaining its policy for the promotion of human rights.

V. INTER-STATE COOPERATION IN SECURITY MATTERS AMONG THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AFRICA

40. During the consideration of this item, the Committee noted with satisfaction the actions and initiatives taken by the States members within the framework of cooperation in security matters aimed, in particular, at lessening tension and combating insecurity in the border areas as well as making it possible to have exchanges between the various national structures dealing with these questions.

41. In view of the transborder nature of most of the security problems in the subregion and owing to the need to respond to them in a joint and concerted manner, the Committee strongly recommended greater cooperation and dialogue among the security forces of the Central African countries, particularly within the framework of periodic meetings and the organization of joint operations.

42. The Committee expressed grave concern about the phenomenon of the illegal circulation of small-calibre weapons and drug trafficking, which constitute a major factor for insecurity in the subregion; it recommended the holding of a subregional conference on these questions and the elaboration of legal

monitoring instruments and the adoption of other appropriate measures to deal with that scourge.

43. A mandate was given to the Chairman of the Bureau to request the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the heads of the international organizations concerned to provide the necessary assistance for speedily organizing such a conference.

44. Recalling the importance of the Non-Aggression Pact concluded in 1996 between the countries of Central Africa for peace and security in the subregion, the Committee invited the countries that had signed the Pact to ratify it. It mandated the Chairman of the Bureau to continue the initiatives undertaken with the countries of the subregion, particularly Angola and Rwanda, which have not yet signed the Pact, so that it can enter into force as soon as possible.

45. Aware of the need to strengthen cooperation in the field of peace and security in the subregion, the Committee recommended the establishment of an appropriate legal framework.

VI. EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONTAINED IN THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MINISTERS OF DEFENCE AND OF THE INTERIOR, HELD AT LIBREVILLE, GABON, FROM 28 TO 30 APRIL 1998, AND IN THE BATA DECLARATION, ADOPTED AT THE SUBREGIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND PEACE IN CENTRAL AFRICA, HELD AT BATA, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, FROM 18 TO 21 MAY 1998, INCLUDING:

Establishment of an early warning mechanism

46. After an in-depth exchange of views on this item and taking into consideration, in particular, the progress made in this area, the Committee committed itself to the effective establishment of an early warning mechanism, thanks to the voluntary contribution made by the Government of the United States of America through OAU and a grant allocated from available resources in the Trust Fund.

47. The Committee once again appeals to the international community to contribute generously to the Trust Fund.

48. The Committee mandated the Chairman of the Bureau to take all necessary steps approaching the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to obtaining assistance for putting the mechanism into operation.

Organization of military exercises in connection with peacekeeping operations between the armed forces of the countries of Central Africa

49. The Committee took note of the recommendations contained in the report drawn up on the question by experts from the subregion and submitted to the various general staffs. It stressed, in particular, the need both to organize

joint military exercises for peacekeeping operations and to ensure an effective contribution by the States members themselves to the holding of those exercises.

50. Taking into account, however, the sizeable amount of resources necessary for organizing such exercises, which aim to strengthen the operational capacities of the countries of the subregion in maintaining peace, the Committee appealed to the international community and, in particular, to the United Nations to provide considerable assistance.

51. In this regard, the Committee mandated the Chairman of the Bureau to continue the necessary initiatives with the United Nations and the donor countries.

Establishment of a Supreme Council for the Promotion of Peace and the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Political Crises and Armed Conflict in Central Africa

52. The Committee recognized the need to establish, within the subregion, a structure for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts making it possible to overcome the current institutional vacuum in this field; such a structure would help to strengthen trust and promote peace, security and lasting development in Central Africa.

53. To that end, it recommended that consideration should be given to the question of establishing a "Supreme Council for the Promotion of Peace and the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Political Crises and Armed Conflict in Central Africa" through a summit meeting of heads of State and Government of the subregion. The Committee mandated the Chairman of the Bureau to initiate consultations for holding such a summit meeting.

Establishment of a subregional parliament

54. The Committee took note of the conclusions of the Ministerial Conference in Bata recommending the establishment of a subregional parliament. It welcomed the efforts already made by the President of Equatorial Guinea, His Excellency Mr. Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, to implement the project.

55. The Committee recommended that those efforts should continue in order to enable a summit meeting of heads of State and Government to establish the subregional parliament. A meeting to be convened by the Chairman of the Bureau and attended by experts and members of parliament was recommended in this regard.

VII. CONSIDERATION OF THE PROJECT TO ESTABLISH A SUBREGIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

56. The Committee once again expressed its support for establishing in Yaoundé a subregional centre for human rights and democracy under the auspices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

57. A mandate was given to the Chairman of the Bureau to take the necessary steps to carry out this project.

VIII. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETING

58. After considering the draft text, the Ministers adopted this report, which approves the work of the tenth ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

IX. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE FINAL DECLARATION

At the conclusion of their work, the Ministers also adopted the Yaoundé Declaration on Peace, Security and Development in Central Africa, which is annexed to the report.

ANNEX II

Yaoundé Declaration on peace, security and development in Central Africa, adopted at Yaoundé on 30 October 1998

1. The tenth meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 29 to 30 October 1998.

2. The Ministers recalled that the Committee had been established by the United Nations General Assembly on the initiative of countries members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). They again stressed the Committee's political importance as the preferred forum for dialogue in the subregion concerning confidence-building, peace and security.

3. The Ministers therefore recommended that the Committee should establish its presence in the subregion so as to make its programme of activities more operational. In that connection, member States reaffirmed their commitment to contribute financially to the Committee's programme of activities.

4. The Ministers acknowledged that since the end of the cold war, security questions had assumed a multidimensional character which called for the implementation of measures covering the political area and also arms limitation and control, development and human rights. To that end, the Ministers mandated the Chairman of the Bureau with ensuring that that comprehensive approach was fully reflected in the discussion by the United Nations General Assembly of the agenda item concerning the Committee's activities.

5. The Ministers reiterated their attachment to the fundamental principles set forth in the Charters of the United Nations and of the Organization of African Unity, including:

Sovereign equality of all States

Non-interference in the internal affairs of States

Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State

Inviolability of inherited colonial borders

6. The Ministers acknowledged that the establishment of lasting peace and sustainable development in Central Africa called for solidarity and full cooperation among all member States of the Committee. In that connection, they recommended that their representatives in the various international bodies should consult one another on an ongoing basis in order to harmonize their positions on issues of common interest. They decided to establish a committee of ambassadors of all member States at the level of all international organizations to harmonize and coordinate their positions on peace and security in Central Africa.

7. The Ministers expressed profound disquiet at the continuing tensions, crises and conflicts in Central Africa. They underscored their great concern at the situation which continued to cause the loss of many human lives, and also substantial material damage and indescribable suffering to the population, inter alia, to refugees and displaced persons.

8. Emphasizing the importance of prevention as a means of averting the eruption of further conflicts in the subregion, the Ministers reiterated the need for the establishment as soon as possible of an early warning system for Central Africa and for the establishment by the Heads of State and Government of a dispute settlement body.

9. The Ministers encouraged the countries of the subregion to work with renewed determination to promote respect for human rights and freedoms and the establishment of the rule of law and democratic political systems so as to permit full participation in political life by all social forces.

10. Considering that peace and development are inextricably linked, the Ministers emphasized the need for countries of the subregion to mobilize the bulk of their resources and efforts in order to improve the situation of their people and, in particular, of the most underprivileged groups. They also recognized that the debt burden weighing on their countries was likely to mortgage their development efforts. Accordingly, they launched an urgent appeal to their bilateral and multilateral partners for an appropriate solution to be found to that thorny problem.

11. The Ministers declared that the struggle for the eradication of poverty should be a major concern of their countries with a view to the establishment of a lasting peace. Strongly emphasizing that the difficult economic situation of member States of the Committee constituted a factor of instability that threatened peace and security in the subregion, they launched a pressing appeal to the international community and, in particular, to the international financial institutions, for increased support for their economic recovery efforts.

12. The Ministers emphasized the need to intensify cooperation and multifaceted trade between their countries, inter alia, by revitalizing economic groups, so as to encourage mixing of their peoples and to establish a culture of peace and of dialogue in the customs of the subregion.

13. The Ministers expressed their profound concern regarding the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which carries within it the seeds of serious risk of destabilization of the entire subregion.

14. Recalling the declaration issued by the Heads of State and Government of Central Africa at the close of their meeting of 24 September 1998 at Libreville, they appealed for a ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of foreign forces of aggression, for respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for the stepping up of the democratization process in that country.

15. Having in mind the Libreville Declaration of 24 September 1998, and expressing their profound concern regarding the deterioration of the situation in Angola and the halting of the peace process in that country, the Ministers urged the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) to comply forthwith with the peace agreements, the Lusaka Protocol and relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

16. The Ministers welcomed the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA) until 3 December 1998 and launched an urgent appeal to all parties to embark resolutely on the road to peace and national construction in order to put an end to the hideous suffering that the Angolan people and, in particular, displaced persons, continued to endure.

17. Stressing the importance of the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola at this critical point in that country's history, the Ministers launched a pressing appeal to the international community asking it to support the presence of that observer Mission beyond 3 December 1998, so as to once again give the process of peace and national reconciliation a chance and thereby avert a general conflagration of the country.

18. The Ministers paid tribute to the memory of Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, who had perished with his staff, for his invaluable contribution to the search for peace in Angola.

19. The Ministers acknowledged that full implementation of the Bangui Agreements and National Reconciliation Pact is essential to national peace and reconciliation in the Central African Republic. They welcomed the significant progress made by the Central African Government in implementing the Bangui Agreements and the launching of major political and economic reforms.

20. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the decision by the Security Council to include in the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) support for the organization of the legislative elections of 22 November and 13 December 1998.

21. Recalling the importance of the role of MINURCA in the maintenance of a climate of security and stability conducive to the strengthening of the process of national reconciliation in the Central African Republic, the Ministers emphasized that MINURCA should not end its activities once and for all until the electoral processes were completed and national reconciliation was sufficiently consolidated.

22. Underscoring the need for the continuation of a constructive dialogue between all elements of the population of Burundi, with a view to strengthening the national reconciliation process, the Ministers expressed concern at the suffering endured by the Burundian people due to the embargo against that country, and launched a pressing appeal for the immediate lifting of that embargo.

23. The Ministers expressed their concern at the persistence of tensions between Cameroon and Nigeria in the Bakassi peninsula. They reaffirmed the need

for the two countries, which have referred the matter to the International Court of Justice for a peaceful settlement of their dispute, to avoid any action that might increase tension between them. They further urged those countries to abide scrupulously by the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Finally, they appealed to the international community for assistance in preserving the peace before, during and after the verdict of the International Court of Justice.

24. The Ministers mandated the Chairman of the Bureau with undertaking and carrying out any mediation likely to help restore or strengthen peace and a lasting national reconciliation in the member States in crisis.

25. The Ministers appealed to the United Nations for assistance in organizing a subregional conference on ways and means of halting the proliferation and illicit marketing of arms and drugs in Central Africa.

26. The Ministers noted that their meeting was taking place at a time when the United Nations was celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of peacekeeping operations. They reaffirmed their support for the Secretary-General of the United Nations and expressed their profound gratitude to the Organization for its unflagging efforts to restore and strengthen peace in Africa and, in particular, in the central African subregion.

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Security Council

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5 November 1998

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 45
THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR
INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Identical letters dated 4 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

Referring to document A/53/540-S/1998/999 dated 26 October 1998, I have the honour to enclose an official note dated 4 November 1998 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan and the text appended to it (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 45, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. G. Ravan FARHÂDI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Note verbale dated 4 November 1998 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan presents its compliments to His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to present herewith "How the Taliban slaughtered 8,000", an article, dated 1 November 1998, in The Sunday Times (London), by Michael Sheridan (see appendix).

Appendix

THE SUNDAY TIMES · 1 NOVEMBER 1998

How the Taliban slaughtered 8,000

by Michael Sheridan

THE first detailed eyewitness accounts of the massacre of up to 8,000 people by Islamic fundamentalist Taliban fighters who ran amok in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-e-Sharif last August have been passed to western governments.

Testimony compiled by international observers and handed to western diplomats in Pakistan reveals that hundreds of people were packed into containers where they suffocated when the doors were locked in the searing midday heat. Men, women and children were shot in their homes and on the street, and hospital patients were murdered in their beds.

The massacre occurred when, during an offensive aimed at seizing full control of Afghanistan for the first time, Mazar-e-Sharif was overrun by the Taliban, who have imposed the world's most extreme interpretation of Islam, barring women from education, banning television and forcing men to wear beards.

Statements made available to The Sunday Times describe a campaign of slaughter directed against a Shia Muslim minority, the Hazara. The evidence, regarded by experienced aid officials as "highly credible", paints a ghastly picture of butchery and rape as the Taliban shot and cut the throats of Hazaras.

The claims are supported by the influential American group Human Rights Watch, which is due to reveal its own findings on the massacre today and will call on the United Nations to investigate what it describes as "one of the single worst examples of killings of civilians in Afghanistan's 20-year war".

The detailed evidence of Taliban atrocities will embarrass western policymakers who still see the fundamentalists as useful players in a modern "great game" to keep Iranian and Russian influence out of Afghanistan and so ensure that the huge oil and gas riches of central Asia remain a prize for western multinationals.

Ten diplomats from Tehran were among those who died, prompting Iran to mass 200,000 troops on its border with Afghanistan to bolster demands for the killers to be handed over for trial. Troop "manoeuvres" were due to begin yesterday.

Based on eyewitness statements, The Sunday Times has pieced together an account of the nightmare that engulfed Mazar-e-Sharif when the Taliban entered the city from the west on the morning of August 8. They were intent on avenging a massacre of some 2,000 of their own men in 1997, when the Hazaras and other fighters turned against them.

There ensued what one witness called "a frenzy" of vengeance killing. The Taliban fighters swept through the city, firing heavy machineguns mounted on pickup trucks. One man described how the streets were covered with bodies and blood. The Taliban, he said, forbade anyone to bury the corpses for six days.

On the second day, according to numerous witnesses, the Taliban began a house-to-house search for Hazara men. Hazaras, descended from Mongols, are easy to recognise by their distinctive Asiatic features compared with the ethnic Pashtuns who make up the ranks of the Taliban. They share their Shia faith with Iran, while the Taliban are Sunni Muslims.

A witness whose testimony is described as "extremely reliable" by aid officials said most of the victims had been shot in the head, the chest and the testicles. Others had been slaughtered in what he called "the halal way" — by having their throats slit.

One housewife, who has since fled to Pakistan, said the Taliban entered her house and shot her husband and her two brothers dead. Then they cut the men's throats in front of the woman and her children.

Another piece of testimony explained why one Taliban was "very worried he might be excluded from heaven". He had personally shot people in nearly 30 houses, opting to kill them as soon as they opened the door. After killing the men in two homes, he learnt that they were not Hazara but Pashtun. "That he had killed people in 28 Hazara households seemed not to cause him any concern at all," the witness said.

Men not murdered on the spot were "stuffed into containers after being badly beaten", said another witness. He saw the doors opened on a container after all the men inside had died from suffocation.

He also testified that some containers were filled with children who were taken to an unknown destination after their parents had been killed.

Human Rights Watch has obtained gruesome confirmation of the Taliban's penchant for death by container. It quotes a man who was detained by the militia and saw container trucks filled with victims leaving the Mazar-e-Sharif jail several times every day.

Once he watched as the Taliban opened the container doors to find three prisoners alive and about 300 dead. The Taliban drove the trucks to a desert site known as Dasht-e-Leili and ordered porters to dump the cargo of corpses in the sands.

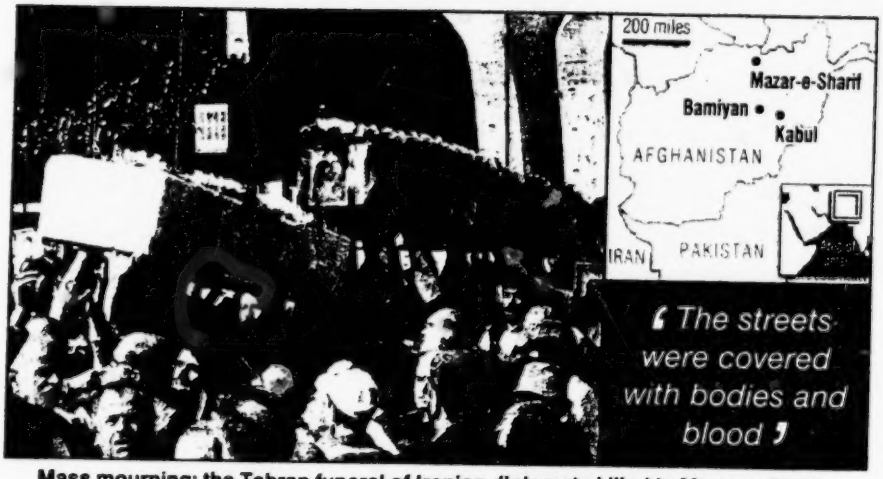
The Human Rights Watch report and other statements identify three Taliban leaders who appear to be guilty of incitement to kill victims purely because of their ethnic origin. They are:

▶ Mullah Manon Niazi, the new Taliban governor of Mazar-e-Sharif. Numerous witnesses heard him make speeches at mosques and on radio inciting hatred of Hazaras. "Wherever you go we will catch you," he said. "If you go up, we will pull you down by your feet; if you hide below we will pull you up by your hair." One witness testified that Niazi personally selected prisoners to be consigned to the death containers.

▶ Mullah Musa, the so-called director of public health. A witness said Musa toured a public hospital looking for Hazara patients to mark out for death. Later that day, the witness heard from a doctor that Musa had taken a group of gunmen to the army hospital, where they had murdered all 20 or so patients, and relatives who had been visiting them.

▶ Maulawi Mohammed Hanif, a Taliban commander who announced to a crowd of 300 people summoned to a mosque that the policy of the Taliban was to "exterminate" the Hazaras.

International aid workers fear the killings are continuing following the recent fall of the central Afghan town of Bamiyan. They have said thousands of people remain unaccounted for.



Mass mourning: the Tehran funeral of Iranian diplomats killed in Mazar-e-Sharif

No mercy: men, women and children were murdered in their homes as Taliban gunmen took over Mazar-e-Sharif

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Letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 2 November 1998, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 62 and 153, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Volkan VURAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 2 November 1998 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the statements made by Greek Cypriot representatives at the meeting of the Sixth Committee on 22 October 1998, under agenda item 153, entitled "Establishment of an international criminal court", in which unfounded allegations were made with a view to distorting the nature of the Cyprus question. Since the Turkish Cypriot side is being denied its right to speak in the said Committee, I am compelled to respond to these allegations in writing.

At the outset, I wish to remind the Greek Cypriot side which depicts the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus as "occupied areas" or "illegal entity" that the only occupation in Cyprus is the 35-year-old usurpation and continued occupation by the Greek Cypriot side of the seat of government of the bi-national Republic of Cyprus established under international treaties in 1960. Thus, the usurper Greek Cypriot regime or its representatives have no right to question the legality of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, as an independent State, which was established through the free and democratic will of the Turkish Cypriot people.

The Greek Cypriot representative unabashedly assumes the role of the "victim" in Cyprus when successive reports of the United Nations Secretary-General and of the international press provide ample graphic evidence of a systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing directed against the Turkish Cypriot people by the Greek Cypriots, with the support of Greece, during the period 1963-1974. As a result of the Greek Cypriot armed onslaught, thousands of Turkish Cypriots were killed, maimed or wounded; one fourth of the Turkish Cypriot population was driven out of 103 villages as the Greek Cypriots systematically tried to eradicate the Turkish Muslim heritage of Cyprus by destroying mosques, shrines and other places of Muslim worship across the island (a list of mosques and Muslim shrines destroyed or damaged by Greek Cypriots until 20 July 1974 was issued as an appendix to document A/53/519-S/1998/973). From 1963, the Turkish Cypriots have been forced to live in scattered enclaves across the island under deplorable conditions, faced with harsh economic restrictions and besieged by hostile Greek Cypriot armed elements.

Today the Greek Cypriot side pursues a policy of escalation and tension on the island within the context of the Joint Military Doctrine with Greece and continues to impose an all-out inhuman embargo on Northern Cyprus with a view to politically isolating the Turkish Cypriot people and hampering its economic and social development. The inhuman measures of embargo being applied with full force against the Turkish Cypriot people range from denying it the right of representation in international forums to preventing or restricting travel and communication with the outside world; curtailing commerce and tourism; and hampering the cultural and sports relations of the Turkish Cypriot people with foreign countries.

In view of the foregoing, it hardly needs to be stressed that Turkey's presence on the island, which emanates from the Treaty of Guarantee of 1960, is a vital security requirement for the Turkish Cypriots, as it serves as a deterrent against the repetition of Greek-Greek Cypriot aggression. In the face of the unprecedented build-up of arms and armed forces by the Greek Cypriot administration, which includes the purchase of the sophisticated S-300 missile system, the construction and inauguration of the Paphos military air base and the ongoing construction of the Zyghi naval base in South Cyprus for use by Greece, the necessity of maintaining the Turkish deterrent becomes all the more obvious.

As regards the so-called "colonization" of Northern Cyprus it should be pointed out that it is the Greek Cypriot side which, together with Greece, has always attempted to alter the demographic character of Cyprus, not only by introducing thousands of settlers from Greece but also by trying to "cleanse" Cyprus of its ethnic Turkish population. At present, the Greek Cypriot administration continues to admit tens of thousands of people from other countries and, as a result of the laxity of its immigration policies, South Cyprus has become, as widely reported by authoritative sources as well as the international press, a centre for money-laundering, drugs, arms smuggling and other illicit activity (see for instance, the International Narcotic Control Strategy report entitled "Money laundering and financial crimes: country reports", issued in 1998 by the State Department of the United States of America).

All parties interested in a peaceful settlement of the Cyprus dispute should no longer condone the efforts of the Greek Cypriot administration, which abuses forums such as the United Nations and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to shed crocodile tears and portray itself as having been victimized in Cyprus, when in fact on the basis of its usurped title of the "Government of Cyprus", it is seeking unilateral membership to the European Union before a viable settlement is reached between the two sides, in total defiance of the 1960 international agreements and the sovereign equality of the two peoples in Cyprus. As long as the Greek Cypriot side can get away with such a posture, it will have no incentive to seek a partnership settlement with the Turkish Cypriot side on the basis of the realities on the island.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 62 and 153, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus